

Rosita, Jose and Maria, at the one end of the table, speak furiously in Spanish, and JR asks Gordon, "Want to know what they're saying?"

"Not if they don't want to tell me," Gordon says, sipping his beer and turning his head to the left to look at JR.

"Not even if they're talking about you?" JR asks, raising his eyebrows. Gordon looks at him quizzically, so JR translates, "My sister says you're a good neighbor, quiet, respectful, a nice boy. Rosita says that she knows you're quiet because you've hardly said a thing, but she likes that you keep looking at her and smiling because she thinks you're hot."

Maria shouts, "JR!"

JR turns to his sister and says, "You were talking about him right in front of him and that's rude."

Gordon turns from JR to gaze at Rosita, who is staring only at Gordon now, and asks, "She said that?"

JR turns back to Gordon and explains, "Well, she didn't say that exactly. There's not a real translation for it in English. It's kind of a slang in Spanish."

Still looking only at Rosita, Gordon raises his eyebrows as he asks, "You think I'm hot?"

Without a hint of embarrassment, Rosita replies, "I didn't say that."

Jose and JR laugh and Maria shakes her head. Jose says, "It was a little...stronger than that, my friend."

Gordon turns to JR and asks, "Well, is there a slang in Spanish like she said but for a woman instead?"

JR looks at Gordon and says, "Oh, yeah."

Gordon looks back at Rosita, who has continued to look only at Gordon, and says, "Well, then, that's what I'm thinking about her."

Everyone else turns to Rosita, who simply asks, smiling, "So, you like it?"

Gordon replies, smiling, "Oh, I could like what you have most anytime. And you?"

"I like it already," Rosita says, changing to a serious expression, "but not tonight. I have to leave in a little while."

"After all that, you're gonna bail?" Gordon asks, incredulously.

"I'll be back," Rosita promises.

"I'll be waiting," Gordon assures her...

Jose, Maria and JR greet Gordon and he returns their greetings, smiling easily at their welcome. He quickly gulps the rest of the beer he carried and Rosita instinctively gets up, walks to the refrigerator, opens it and removes another can of beer. Deftly, she steps back to the table and sets the unopened can before Gordon. Looking up at Rosita, he thanks her as she brushes his right arm and picks up the empty can, steps to the garbage can and deposits it inside. Gordon watches her unflinchingly, noting that her movements are smooth and graceful. She steps back around her chair and sits down, knowing that he was watching her, wearing a calm and comfortable smile. Jose and Maria's children are nowhere to be seen and cannot be heard. Gordon doesn't ask.

Jose smiles and asks, "So, what did you do today, my friend?"

Gordon turns to Jose with a serious expression. "Still lookin' for work, Jose," he replies.

"I hope you find something soon," Maria says, a look of friendly concern on her face. She asks, "Isn't your unemployment running out?"

"Yeah," Gordon says, "but I think I've got a good prospect at the university."

"What do you do?" Rosita asks, and she places her right hand on his thigh under the table and out of sight of the others, rubbing it slowly.

Gordon can feel her hand rubbing his thigh through his jeans and he enjoys it, but his expression offers no evidence of what is taking place under the table, invisible to his hosts. "Work with computers," Gordon replies, calmly, matter-of-factly, turning to Rosita with a gentle smile, "mostly software support." He places his left hand on top of her hand and squeezes it while he casually looks away from her. He lifts his beer can with his right hand, takes a gulp from his beer, and sets it back down on the table. When he glances to Rosita, she is smiling and he returns her smile knowingly.

"Is it hard work?" she asks.

"Nothing like what Jose does," Gordon says, "but it has its challenges."

"I'm on my feet all day as a waitress, so my legs and back hurt sometimes," Rosita says, "but I have the day off today."

"So, you're not hurting now?" Gordon asks.

"No, I'm fine," Rosita says, and her smile grows wide with anticipation. She squeezes his thigh harder and his hand rubs hers deeper.

"Good," Gordon comments. There is a moment of silence at the table and Gordon squeezes her hand and rubs it hard against his thigh, and both smile at each other. Gordon adds, "When you're hurting like that, though, you should get a back rub."

"Who would give me a back rub?" Rosita inquires with a brief quizzical expression, which immediately melts back into her anticipatory smile.

"I'd give you a back rub," Gordon offers, his eyes twinkling deviously, "but with one condition."

"What's that?" Rosita asks, smiling as she licks her lips self-consciously.

"You'd have to take your top and bra off," he says, still displaying that devious, playful expression. "I only work with bare skin." He smiles broadly and she returns his smile.

"I can do that," she replies, her smile displaying the same devious, playful expression. She suddenly slides her hand inside his leg, squeezes it, and rubs up his thigh up to his crotch... - pages 45-48